
NEWS RELEASE

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SENATORS GREGG AND SUNUNU ANNOUNCE PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD TO OVERHAUL USS JACKSONVILLE

PNS also to benefit from share of \$28.9 million for Shipyard Apprentice Program funding nationwide

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senators Judd Gregg (R-NH) and John Sununu (R-NH) today announced that the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard will be funded to perform an engineering refueling overhaul of the USS Jacksonville, SSN 699. The Senate Appropriations Committee today approved the Fiscal Year 2004 Defense Appropriations bill, which specified \$248 million for the overhaul. In addition to the overhaul, the measure includes \$28.9 million to be divided between the four U.S. Naval shipyards for the Naval Shipyard Apprentice Program. Senators Gregg and Sununu recently announced the FY04 Military Construction Appropriations bill currently working its way through the Senate includes \$7.6 million they included for two projects which affect the Granite State: \$6.1 million for a new fire, crash and rescue station on the Pease Air National Guard Base in Newington and \$1.5 million for the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard's Structural Shop Consolidation Project. The FY04 Defense Appropriations measure is expected to come before the full Senate for its consideration before the August recess.

Senator Gregg, a member of the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, stated, "During its twenty two years of service to the United States Navy, the USS Jacksonville has carried the men and women of our armed forces all over the world, including ports in Australia, Africa and Asia. The Navy will now call on the employees at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard to perform upgrades and maintenance on the Jacksonville to return the submarine to service on schedule. Late last year, the USS Alexandria left the Shipyard following a stay of less than eleven months and at a record-low cost to the Navy, and in May, the USS Albuquerque returned to the seas, breaking records again. The men and women at the Shipyard continue to demonstrate their tremendous ability and I have every confidence they will once again prove their importance in the defense of our country.

"I am also pleased to see the Committee recognize the importance of the work being done by the Shipyard apprentice program, which I have always strongly supported. The funding will allow the Shipyard to induct a 2004 class of no fewer than 125 apprentices which means the future of Los Angeles-class submarines being overhauled in Portsmouth is in excellent hands."

Senator Sununu stated, "The resources for the USS Jacksonville project will allow Portsmouth Naval Shipyard employees to again demonstrate their critical role in helping to keep our country's Los Angeles Class nuclear submarines at the ready. Through the repair and overhaul of these vessels – the yard's primary work – the United States national security continues to be strengthened and maintained. I have no doubt that the Jacksonville repair and overhaul will serve as another successful example that the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is a cost-effective and competitive resource for the Navy. Additionally, the Committee's approval of apprentice program funding represents a commitment toward ensuring that future generations of Shipyard employees have the skills they need for this valuable work."

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